



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer-
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

At its meeting held February 6, 2007, the Board took the following action:

62-B

Supervisor Burke made the following statement:

“On February 1, 2007, KNBC TV Los Angeles aired a story by investigative reporter Joel Grover which showed deplorable conditions at the 7th Street Wholesale Produce Market. The disgusting pictures shown in this report of rats and food contamination are a reminder that continual vigilance is necessary to protect the public and assure safe food.

“It is clear that the Environmental Health Inspectors failed to perform their duties in assuring that the vendors provide a clean environment to protect the health and safety of the public.

“Over 20 years ago, when Mayor Bradley created the development project and put together the financing for the new Los Angeles wholesale produce market facility near Alameda and Olympic, many of us thought that the new market would make the old markets obsolete and they would be redeveloped for new uses. Yet, it seems that the demand for wholesale produce space continues to be high in Downtown and these old structures are being used, however bad the conditions. We need to not only clean up these old markets, but to work with the City to jointly plan to phase out these obsolete facilities.”

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Therefore, on motion of Supervisor Burke, seconded by Supervisor Antonovich, unanimously carried, the Board took the following actions:

1. Instructed the Director of Public Health to:
 - Report back to the Board within 15 days with a specific plan to address public health problems at the wholesale produce markets, specifically the 7th Street Wholesale produce market, including review of such options as more frequent inspections, revised inspection criteria, and increased sanctions for violations; and
 - Conduct an investigation of staff failures in the inspection of the market; and
2. Authorized the Chairman of the Board to send a letter to the Mayor of the City of Los Angeles asking for his cooperation by:
 - Assuring that the City's Building and Safety Department works with Public Health to enforce compliance with existing building and safety as well as health standards; or, if there is continued noncompliance by the operator of the facility, to revoke its operating license; and
 - Initiating a planning effort of relevant City and County agencies to develop a long-term plan for adequate facilities for wholesale food vendors in the Downtown area.

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Copies distributed:

Each Supervisor
Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Director of Health Services
Director of Public Health

Letter sent to:

Mayor, City of Los Angeles